

Camden Council Community Safety and Drug team contracted Kaizen in 2005 to conduct community engagement work on the St. Pancras Way estates. This was a pilot project that sought to address anti-social behaviour (ASB) through community engagement. The community engagement strategy ran along side other more traditional measures for tackling ASB (such as additional policing, infrastructure improvements etc.).

The success of this pilot project led to a further contract to do similar work on 5 estates showing the highest levels of reported ASB in five wards.

Key intended outputs/outcomes

- To increase neighbourliness and social cohesion and to get residents actively involved in decision-making.
- To get agencies and residents together to agree on how to move things forward, developing partnership working.
- To reduce levels of anti social behaviour and drug activity on the estates.

Community engagement strategies/activities

Kaizen's role in the estates work was to promote and support wider community involvement. Kaizen carried out a broad community engagement strategy to inform and excite residents and professionals about the project. During this phase, over 120 residents and professionals were contacted with details of the project and 46 phone interviews were carried out with residents. That brought more than 45 residents, tenants and professionals to a two-day leadership event.

After the workshop, Kaizen provided phone coaching for those members of the community wanting to step up and make things happen. They also supported residents to arrange fun days on the estates to bring the community together.

Short Term Results

Kaizen's work resulted in a much larger and more diverse group of people involved. Dave Francis, Community Engagement Officer said:

"At the Leadership workshop people said they didn't even know that certain individuals existed on the estate. They began to break down the barriers between them, and to share fears, concerns and stereotypes they had. That in and of itself was a successful outcome, although difficult to quantify."

Concrete outcomes that resulted from the community engagement included:

- Residents directly influenced what the Joint Action Group delivered. E.g. at Leadership Workshop, a lot of young people said there was nothing to do on the estates. They subsequently got involved in setting up and running a youth club one night a week.
- Over 800 people attended fun days across the estates.
- Created register of over 50 people willing to volunteer on the estates.

“Unprompted, resident participants in the final project session described a genuine sense of ownership and pride that had been generated through ‘having a go’ and pulling off what they previously had considered difficult or impossible to achieve on their estates.”

Long Term Impact

- In 2006/07 there was an 18% reduction in anti social behaviour across the 5 estates as measured by housing data and police data on criminal damage.
- Agencies that were not previously working together, are now working in partnership.
- Camden has mainstreamed the idea that residents have to be involved in decision-making. E.g. they started a priority estates programme in 06/07, which involves residents from the beginning.

“Before residents complained and we tried to do something about it. Now they are being involved up front in developing strategies and making decisions.”

What is different about Kaizen

“Kaizen staff and contractors consistently give the impression that they really get where people are coming from. They use accessible language, and will go out of their way to engage people, literally knocking on people’s doors. This is a very different approach and people really respond. To get 40 or 50 people to turn up on a weekend to discuss their estate is near impossible and they managed it every time. So the methodology, although different, really works.”